

CITY OF WHIGHAM  
COUNCIL MEETING  
AUGUST 9, 2022

The Whigham City Council met in regular session on Tuesday, August 9, 2022 at the Whigham City Council Chambers with Mayor Trey Gainous presiding. Gainous called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. and asked Mayor Pro Tem Jim Sellers to open the meeting with a prayer and led the Pledge to the Flag.

Those present were: Mayor Trey Gainous, Jim Sellers, Robert Porter, Joel Singletary, Andrew Walden, Utilities Director Josh Ausburn, Police Chief Tony Black, and City Clerk Rachel Jenson.

***Agenda Adoption***

**A motion was made by Robert Porter to adopt the agenda. Joel Singletary seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.**

***Minutes Adoption***

**A motion was made by Jim Sellers to adopt the minutes from the June meeting. Joel Singletary seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.**

***Public Hearing***

2022/2023 Budget: Mayor Gainous told the Council a second public hearing for the 22/23 budget would take place on this evening and then, if no objections, the Council could vote to approve the budget. Gainous explained that there would be a proposal to increase the water rates to generate more revenue since the electric rates were steep already and the water revenues were barely breaking even against the used consumption. Councilman Porter inquired about the Fire Department's request for the new truck and it's line item. Gainous explained he showed the profit that will be received from the old truck being sold in the revenue area and added a line item to show where the money needed to purchase would be coming from the MEAG short term portfolio. **With no other objections for the budget, Jim Sellers made a motion to accept the water rates as proposed: "bundle customers" (customers who have both electric and water services) will have a minimum water bill of \$20.00 and "non-bundle customers" (customers outside the city limits with water service only) will have a minimum water bill of \$25.00. Robert Porter seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the water rate increase. Motion carried.**

**In regards to the budget, Jim Sellers made a motion to accept the budget as proposed for the 2022/2023 Fiscal Year. Joel Singletary seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Motion carried.**

***Reports***

***City Hall:*** Mayor Gainous asked the City Clerk to give the City Hall report. City Clerk Jenson informed the Council of the concerns and issues she and Assistant Clerk Taylor Lambert had been experiencing with the billing software. She stated they had had no official training, could not do billing by themselves, had no work orders to give the utilities department and she and the Assistant Clerk felt like the City was losing revenue due to bills going out late and late fees not being applied for 3 months. Jenson reported a company recommended by NightHawk meters, PCS, had given them a quote for billing service, which was passed to all Councilmembers. Mayor Gainous told the Council that this company was more money

than the current billing software had quoted to us, but we were just not getting results from the company HyperWeb. Joel Singletary said he would like to see other quotes from other billing software companies, which all members agreed. Jenson stated she and Lambert would get information together to present at the September meeting. Jenson also informed the Council that Lambert would be taking her place at the next Council meeting due to her attending City Clerk training.

*Police Dept:* Chief Black informed the Mayor and Council a complaint had been made against one of his officers and he was looking further into the complaint.

*Utilities Dept:* Utilities Director Josh Ausburn informed the Council he had been cutting the right of way in several areas, had installed new meters for CSX, new transformers had been installed and he and Israel Kirkland had been working on a water leak on 179 that they discovered.

### ***New Business***

*Meag Signatory Appointments:* Mayor Gainous told the Council that a signatory would have to be designated to replace the late Mayor Trulock with Meag. The City Clerk told the Council a new resolution and formal vote would have to be done to make the change. **Robert Porter made a motion to add Trey Gainous to the signatory affidavit along with Jim Sellers, who was presently listed on the document. Joel Singletary seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.**

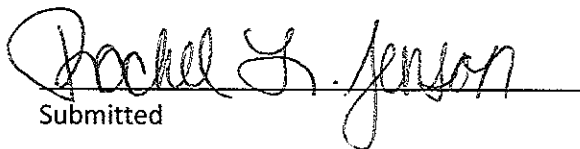
### ***Council Matters of Interest***

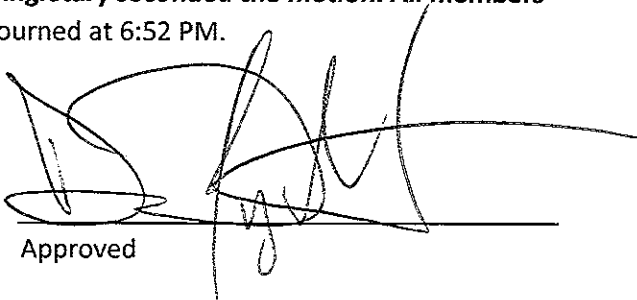
Gainous opened the floor for discussion for Andrew Walden, who was present, to potentially fill the vacant Council seat. Walden stated he had previously served on the Planning Committee when it was active. Sellers stated he hated the committee hadn't lasted longer and more people didn't want to serve on it. With no other questions for Mr. Walden, **Jim Sellers made a motion to appoint Andrew Walden to the vacant Council seat. Joel Singletary seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.**

Mayor Gainous expressed concern about the rates for cemetery lots in the Woodlawn Cemetery. He had been informed by the City Clerk and Utilities Director that people were coming to Whigham to purchase lots solely because they were so cheap, at only \$100 per lot, where in surrounding areas the lots were \$500 or more. Ausburn also informed the Mayor and Council that several cemeteries charged opening fees for burials and the new section of the Woodlawn Cemetery was probably at 70% capacity. The Council asked the City Clerk to talk to City Attorney Charlie Ferenchick to see what would be involved in potentially raising the prices of the cemetery lots.

City Clerk Rachel Rogers administered the Council Oath of Office to Andrew Walden.

**A motion to adjourn was made by Jim Sellers. Joel Singletary seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:52 PM.**

  
Submitted

  
Approved